

From our files

All able-bodied men responsible for roads

The work of maintaining Oakville's streets was performed by statute labor between 1850 and 1857, the year of the town's incorporation. The Trafalgar township law, which was then in effect, required all men between the ages of 21 and 60 to do the necessary work. Men whose names did not appear on the assessment rolls and those who were assessed up to 50 pounds were liable for two days' work. Those assessed at between 50 and 150 pounds were required to put in three days, and the scale rose to eleven days for assessment of between 1,600 and 2,000 pounds.

After Oakville was incorporated, the town council set the scale for statute labor "in accordance with the Statute 16 Victoria, Chapter 182," 1853. This called for more work than

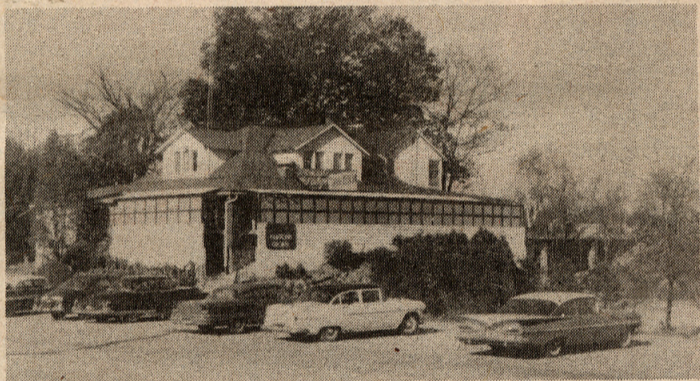
the former law, and the commutation, by which men could avoid doing the work, was raised from two shillings and sixpence to three shillings and ninepence a day.

Plank sidewalks were laid along each side of Colborne Street (Lakeshore Road) in 1849 by public subscription. The next year the township agreed to a special assessment on Oakville property to raise 50 pounds to lay a walk on the east side of Navy Street to the pier. In 1855 plank walks were laid to the Temperance Hall, the Roman Catholic and Presbyterian churches, the schoolhouse, and across the Sixteen Mile Creek to the top of the hill beyond the foundry. The total cost of the work was 210 pounds, 11 shillings and sixpence.



Storm sewer construction and paving work on Colborne Street, now Lakeshore Road. (Courtesy Oakville Historical Society).

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